

NOAA FY 1999 Budget Request Fact Sheet

National Ocean Service

Natural Disaster Reduction Initiative Request

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS) requests an increase of \$4.5 million in FY 1999 for work supporting the President's Natural Disaster Reduction Initiative (NDRI). Included in the total request for NOS is:

- \$1.4 million for assessments of coastal risks and hazards;
- \$1.0 million for research on hypoxia in the northern Gulf of Mexico
- \$1.5 million for damage assessment and restoration activities;
- \$0.6 million for research on toxic algal blooms; and

NOAA Budget	FY99 Program Change \$M
National Ocean Service	
Ocean Resources Conservation & Assessment	
(Ocean Assessment Program)	2.4
(Damage Assessment Program)	1.5
(Coastal Ocean Program)	0.6
NOS NDRI - Total	4.5

Natural Hazards

There are compelling reasons to act decisively to improve the Nation's preparedness for, and understanding of, natural hazards. Changes in U.S. society such as an increasing proportion of the population in coastal areas, urbanization, and the interdependence of infrastructures and lifelines, have led to greater impacts and risks from natural hazards. Further, the frequency and intensity of significant weather related hazards appear to be on the rise. The costs and risks from recurring events are accelerating dramatically with continued development and population growth in sensitive areas. This winter's El Nino impacts are a stark reminder of the vulnerability of coastal populations and structures to climate extremes

The Natural Disaster Reduction Initiative - Taking Action Now

The NOS components of the NDRI complement the broader, integrated NOAA request of \$55 million by focusing on

coastal needs. In turn, the NDRI is part of a larger effort developed by the Administration through the National Science and Technology Council's Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, representing 16 federal agencies. NOAA's contributions address two critical areas:

- Moving out of harm's way – by improving warnings and forecasts for protecting people and property from the immediate threat of hazards.
- Keeping out of harm's way – by providing tools and information for the private and public sectors of society to ensure that people and property are either not in the path of natural hazards or are more resilient to them when they occur.

Descriptions of the NOS components of the NDRI are:

Assessments Of Coastal Risks And Hazards (\$1.4 million)

Coastal Risk Atlas: A web-based, national coastal risk atlas will be developed in partnership with the US Geological Survey, Federal Emergency Management Agency, state and local governments, and the private sector to identify the threat of natural hazards and the vulnerability of coastal populations and infrastructure. The atlas will include all the available data layers within high-risk localized areas, beginning with selected communities in the southeast.

Ocean Color Continuity: Working with other NOAA line offices, NOAA's National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service (NESDIS) will lead the development of enhanced remote sensing capabilities for hazards identification, primarily in the marine and estuarine environment. New, space-based color sensor systems will be applied in characterizing volcanic ash clouds, harmful algal blooms and oil spills.

Impact of Hazards on Habitat: Working with NOS, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will lead the development of natural and technological hazards risk tables for various habitat types



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important to fisheries management. Funding is included to develop a framework to incorporate the evaluation of impacts on natural resources following future hazard events and monitor the spatial and temporal aspects of habitat recovery.

Hypoxia (\$1.0 million)

NOS will support research on hypoxia in the northern Gulf of Mexico (GOM). A persistent dead zone in the northern GOM develops seasonally and threatens nationally important fisheries. The request will support process research and diagnostic modeling to quantify the causes and effects of this condition and develop effective land-based management strategies to control nutrient runoff and other sources of this problem in the Mississippi River drainage area. This request is part of the NOPP, and complements \$0.4 million in funds requested by NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research.

Damage Assessment and Restoration (\$1.5 million)

This request will enable NOAA and NOS to conduct case-specific studies to support natural resource damage assessments and develop more effective methods to restore coastal and estuarine habitats impacted by spills of oil and hazardous materials.

Harmful Algal Blooms (\$0.6 million)

NOS will support research for the ECOHAB (Ecology and Oceanography of Harmful Algal Blooms) project through the National Ocean Partnership Program (NOPP) to define linkages between the extent and composition of harmful algal blooms in coastal waters, ocean processes, and land-use patterns in adjacent watersheds to improve control and mitigation efforts.

The NOAA and NOS NDRI Role

NOAA's FY 1999 NDRI investment will lead to general economic and societal benefits. The NDRI provides for an integrated and cross-functional approach to addressing a significant public policy issue, but depends on the simultaneous and strategic application of NOAA expertise and capabilities. A portion of the funds requested under the NOS budget activity will be utilized in collaboration with other NOAA line offices to pursue related NDRI objectives in the coastal

and ocean environment. NOAA's strengths in hydrometeorological and ocean observations, research, assessments, predictions, communications and capacity building will be applied to reduce the impacts of natural extremes on all time scales. NOS is critically positioned to address means to reduce risk and vulnerability, protect resources, and translate scientific understanding to practical management solutions in the coastal zone. NOS will provide a leadership role in characterizing the risks, vulnerability and true costs of coastal hazards; supporting coastal zone management for improved planning and disaster mitigation; understanding the nature and impacts of biological and related physico-chemical hazards; and assessing and restoring damages to coastal and marine trust resources. The NOS focus on coastal needs, requirements and environmental stressors is both timely and critical based on demographic expectations and the increased relative vulnerability of coastal populations and natural resources.

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